DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 305 810 EC 212 761

AUTHOR Afable, Lourdes B.
TITLE Transition in a Preschool Specialized Education Program: Strategies for Parent Involvement.
PUB DATE 16 Nov 88
NOTE 82p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Anxiety; *Disabilities; Infants; *Parent Education; *Parent Participation; Parent Teacher Conferences; *Preschool Education; Program Effectiveness; *Transitional Programs; Workshops

ABSTRACT

The practicum was designed to increase parent participation in a preschool (birth to 3 years) special education program serving children with handicaps in Chicago, Illinois. The practicum was intended to provide parents with an effective and meaningful involvement in a structured program of transition services. Input from both staff and parents documented the existence of a problem in the area of parent involvement. A survey questionnaire of parents identified issues which concerned them. Two workshops were held for 36 parents on the topics of: (1) transition; (2) information sharing; (3) parent experiences in the preschool program, special education programs, and after-school programs; and (4) coping with the needs of a handicapped child. Parents also attended parent-teacher conferences. Parents rated the transition activities as highly satisfactory, but their anxiety level did not decrease. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED305811

PRACTICUM REPORT

Center for the
Advancement of Education
Ed.D. Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Transition in a Preschool Specialized Education Program: Strategies for Parent Involvement

by

Lourdes B. Afable

3301 College Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314
305/475-7300

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lourdes B. Afable

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

NOVA UNIVERSITY

EC218761

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Transition in a Preschool Specialized Education Program: Strategies for Parent Involvement

by

Lourdes B. Afable

Cluster XXIV

DEC 5 - 1988

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program
in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1988

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Frieda J. Brown
Dr. Frieda Brown

Director of Bureau of Early Childhood Education
for the Handicapped

Chicago Public Schools - 1819 West Pershing Road
Chicago, Illinois 60609

October 18, 1988
Date

This practicum report was submitted by (Lourdes B. Afable) under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

November 16, 1988
Date of Final Approval

Polly Peterson, Ph.D. Signature
Polly Peterson, Ph.D., Adviser
of Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....iii

LIST OF TABLES.....iv

APPENDICES.....v

ABSTRACT.....vi

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION.....1

Description of Community.....1
Author's Work Setting and Role.....3

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM.....6

Problem Description.....6
Problem Documentation.....7
Causative Analysis.....8
The Related Literature.....10

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS.19

Statement of General Goals.....19
Behavioral Expectations.....19
Evaluation Instruments.....23

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY.....26

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions.....26
Description of Selected Solutions.....20
Report of Action Taken.....31

V RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....36

Characteristics of Parent Participants.....36
Results.....37
Conclusions.....45
Recommendations.....47
Dissemination.....48

REFERENCES.....49

List of Tables

Table 1: Performance Objectives.....20

APPENDICES

A	Mean Ratings Rank Order Most Satisfied to Least Satisfied on A Six Point Likert Rating Scale	52
B	Parent Topic Selection	54
C	Parent Workshop Selection	56
D	PIE Parents Workshop I	58
E	PIE Parents Workshop II	60
F	Workshop Evaluation	62
G	Letter to Parent Regarding Meeting in August, 1988	65
H	Transition-Related Parent-Teacher Conference	67
I	Summary of Post-Transition Conference with Social Worker	69
J	Evaluation of Transition-Related Activities (Parents)	71
K	Evaluation of Transition-Related Activities (Teachers)	73

Abstract

Transition in a Preschool Specialized Education Program: Strategies for Parent Involvement
Afable, Lourdes B., 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Early Childhood Education
Descriptors: Early Childhood/Preschool Programs/Transition/Special Needs/School-Parent Communication/Parent-Teacher Conference/Parent Education/Parent Participation/Multidisciplinary Approach/Intervention

This practicum was designed to increase parent participation during the period of transition in a preschool (birth to 3 years) specialized education program. The goals were to provide parents with an effective and meaningful involvement in a structured program of transition services, assist parents, teachers and other school personnel in designing and conducting mutually satisfying transition-related activities, and develop a model for transition services and procedures.

The writer administered a survey questionnaire to parents about issues which concerned them, determined degree of parent participation through school documents and staff interviews, identified participants through the tracking system, planned and conducted two workshops for parents, scheduled and monitored parent-teacher conferences, arranged for follow-up of parent participants in the new school settings, supervised and maintained the program, and developed and administered an evaluation component.

Results indicated that these kinds of activities increased parent participation and provided opportunities for improved interaction between parents and teachers. However, data also revealed that parents of children with special needs continued to demonstrate a high degree of anxiety about their child's schooling. Literature supports this finding and further recommends that school personnel could be assured of these parents' involvement if they were engaged in a program of activities which provides for their wish for more information, participation in decision-making, and interaction with key figures involved in their child's schooling.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The Parent Infant Education Program (PIE) serves children from birth to 3. It is one of several programs of a school located in a large, urban metropolitan community. The school's population includes children in the PIE, kindergarten to sixth graders and other special education students. Its total population as of January, 1988 is 417. Except for four students in the regular program, all other students are bused to the school.

The enrollment includes 42% of the students in kindergarten to sixth grade, 24% are in special education programs such as LD, BD-ED, and TMH-Hearing-Impaired, and 34% are in the PIE Program. The male to female ratio of students shows an almost equal distribution of 210 males to 207 females. Racial/ethnic data shows that 51% of the students are Black, 27% are White/Non-Hispanic, 18% are Hispanic, 2% are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 2% are American Native/ Alaskan Native.

The school lacks a sense of community since it is situated in a nonresidential area. It is about three miles

from the Loop and is surrounded by a police training academy, a magnet high school, a few restaurants and small factories.

The PIE Program was established in 1972. Then, it was conceived to serve only children (birth to three years) with hearing and vision problems. Since 1975, the program serves children with severe handicaps. Being the only program of its kind in a big city, it has been the showcase to many educational institutions.

The eight PIE Program classrooms are located on the first floor of a three-story building. The age range of the 142 students is from two months to 33 months. The average age of students in the program is 24 months.

The racial/ethnic distribution of the students in the PIE Program comprise 38% Black, 29% White/Non-Hispanic, 21.8% Hispanic, 5.6% American Native/Alaskan Native, and 5.6% Asian or Pacific Islander. The 40 children, who are the subjects of this study, approached their third birthday between April to June, 1988. Data on the subjects' handicapping conditions and parent demographic data are presented in Chapter V.

The program requires submission of medical information about the child. Children are enrolled without a full case study evaluation. Upon admission, some evaluations are completed based on the referring physician's primary diagnosis. The ongoing work with parents (as well as

teachers and other staff) is projected to enhance parental abilities in managing the child. Parents are informally told of the transition process when signatures are secured for a full case study evaluation three months prior to the child's third birthday.

The children, together with their parent(s) or any other designated adult are bused to and from the school. The parent(s) or his/her designee has to be with the child during the hour's stay in the school. Eight teachers serve the program, assisted by a head teacher or program coordinator, five aides, a bus attendant, a driver, a clerk who schedules bus routes, a social worker, a psychologist, speech therapist, nurse and occupational therapist. Home visits are conducted regularly by the teacher, nurse and social worker.

Writer's Work Setting, Role and Responsibilities

The 430,000 students in this school system attend preschool to high school programs in either regular, vocational or special education. The school system's population includes 60.1% Black, 23.4% Hispanic, 13.5% White/Non-Hispanic, 2.8% Asian or Pacific Islander and .2% American Indian, Alaskan Native.

Seventy-two percent of the total enrollment are preschool and elementary students and 28% are in high school, and 3% percent are in special education programs. Limited-English Proficient students comprise 11% of the

student body. The student attendance rate is 91.4%, while the student mobility rate is 70%. The students' parents SES range from low to upper middle class.

The writer is a social work coordinator in the Bureau of Social Work. She is supervised by a director and shares supervisory and administrative duties with two coordinators. The Bureau has 199 school social workers and eight second year graduate interns in social work. The writer's primary assignment includes the supervision of 65 school social workers assigned citywide to special education programs and three diagnostic centers. She also monitors the internship program which includes extensive contacts with university liaisons and the state board of education social work consultant.

The writer has an undergraduate degree in social work and a master's degree in social work attained in 1965. Her clinical training and supervisory skills have been applied in various settings such as family service agencies, adoption, and senior citizens' programs. She worked in the Philippines, Canada, and the United States. In addition, she teaches a course in child development at a private college.

The writer is a certified social worker, a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers with diplomate status and listed in the Clinical Social Work Registry. She

also has the state certificate for social workers with supervisory endorsement.

Prior to her appointment as a coordinator in 1983, she served as a district social worker for seven years and was assigned to a diagnostic center for three years.

Additionally, the writer serves in the Fieldwork Advisory Committee and the School Social Work Advisory Council of a school of social work. She is a member of the school system's Pupil Personnel Services Task Force and the School Social Work Advisory Council. She is involved in the recruitment of minority students for a graduate school of social work and serves as a consultant to social work graduates on career planning. Her presentations to district superintendents, principals, teachers and other school personnel includes topics on childhood and adolescent depression and suicide, stress and coping, dealing with psychiatric emergencies, utilization of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual III in social work practice and teaching the adult learner.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Parent involvement in their child's education has been the subject of numerous investigations especially since the enactment in 1975 of PL 94-142 (The Education for all Handicapped Children Act). The law mandates the inclusion of parents in IEP meetings and specified that parents assume the role of active, equal participants (Brinckerhoff & Vincent, 1986). These authors, after retrospective surveys of IEP meetings documented that parents were not active, equal participants in the meeting and were not adequately informed about various aspects of the IEP meeting.

Brinckerhoff and Vincent also stated that Lynch and Stein found in 1982 that interviews with 400 parents indicated that parental definition of their active role in the IEP meeting ranged from agreeing with teachers to expressing opinions. Moreover, a study by Gillman and Coleman in 1981 (Brinckerhoff & Vincent, 1986) revealed that school staff ranked parental contributions at the IEP meeting as less important than their own contributions.

In the PIE Program, the problem is the lack of focus among teachers and other school staff in securing parental opinions about their child's schooling. The parents' insight into their child's strengths and needs and their participation in program planning have not been solicited. The parents' fears related to their child's change in placement have been ignored. Also, both parents and teachers do not have the knowledge of the dynamics involved in the transition phase of the child's education.

Based on her observations and interviews with staff, this writer concludes that the PIE Program staff tends to be strongly guided by their professional judgements and almost gave no importance to parental input. It was also apparent that there was no conscious effort by the staff to inquire about the reasons for the lack of parental involvement.

Problem Documentation

Evidence documenting the existence of the problem included: (a) Data from the logs kept by the head teacher which consistently noted that the parents' attendance in meetings was markedly low, (b) the teachers' expressed concern that the parents were either hesitant, passive, uninterested, or lacked basic knowledge about developmental processes, and (c) the staff's complaints about excessive telephone calls made by the parents during the first two months of their child's transfer to a new school or program.

Further, the staff felt that these calls were unwarranted and wished for suggestions to decrease them.

Moreover, 30 of the 40 questionnaires returned by the parents indicated issues which needed to be addressed. The issues were: (a) The parents' ambivalence in accepting the placement decision coupled by expressed worries about their child's adjustment in the new school, (b) the parents' lack of understanding of special education categories and procedures; 25% of the respondents indicated that they wished they knew more about the special needs of their child and the procedures related to improving their condition, and (c) the parents' lack of understanding of the transition process rendering them unable to identify the stressors related to the change(s) in their child's educational setting and program.

Causative Analysis

Several causes contributed to the lack of parental participation in this pre-school specialized education program. One of the causes is the lack of a structured and well-planned program to give support to parents at a time which could be stressful. Cursory programming could lead to duplication of efforts and lack of an identified staff who could oversee the smooth flow of procedural components (Brandt, 1987).

Another cause is the school personnel's failure to secure parental input in matters they needed clarified or

answered. This problem also added to the parents' perception that their opinions did not matter or that staff did not care to know more about them. Lipsky (1985) criticized professionals for not seeing parents as fit partners. Calvert (1971) cited that numerous proposals for federal funds were disapproved because parents were not involved in program planning, administration and supervision.

A third cause was the teachers' inability to maximize the utilization of the teacher-parent conference as a mechanism to provide an individualized approach to enhance opportunities for parents to share their fears and opinions about themselves and their child. Johnson, et al. (1986) in investigating a small sample, concluded that the parents indicated the greatest satisfaction with parent-teacher conferences and the least satisfaction with the amounts and types of school and classroom involvement. The latter conclusion was cited by Lipsky (1985) and Turnbull and Turnbull (1982) who believed that parents left matters of the classroom, such as curriculum to the teachers. However, parents needed opportunities to express their frustration and pressures and needed assistance with coping strategies.

Lastly, both staff and parents did not anticipate that transition (change) from a pre-school specialized program to kindergarten/other special education program could be unsettling and could produce stress on the parents and the

child. Brandt (1987) and Johnson, et al. (1986) cited that parents underwent a degree of transition-related stress even when they agreed that their child was ready to move on.

The Related Literature

The writer surveyed the literature on early childhood education transition programs and parent involvement in the transition process. The latter focus had to be expanded to include parent/family involvement in special education programs. The extensive literature reviewed on this subject had significant relevance to this study.

Transition was defined in the Early Intervention State Plan as, "Movement from one service component to another" (Depp, 1986). Healy, Keesee and Smith (1985) stated that:

> " 'Transitioning' refers not to the element of service but to the repeated passage of the child and family from one set of service circumstances to another. Transitions can occur with changes in availability of services or changes in personnel who coordinate or provide services. The need for services may change from for example, primary health services to developmental services. Developmental change in the child can indicate a change in service is needed. Both eligibility for services and cost of services can lead to transitions as well" (p. 88).

Based on an informal survey and review of literature, Brandt (1987) stated that the common themes which had to be answered during the process of transition included: (a) A need to look at transition as a process which involved change which could be difficult and unsettling for both child and family; the question of any problem planning a

transition process was how to minimize stresses, (b) a need to designate individuals to help the parents in making decisions about program and services for the child, (c) the need for comprehensive planning to better coordinate the assessment process to avoid needless duplication, (d) extending assistance to parents in resolving the "conflict" about having to move on from a "family-oriented" infant program to "child-oriented" public school programs, and (e) establishing linkages which enhanced parent-teacher interaction and tracking of program transition candidates.

Noting that the child in the PIE Program had handicapping conditions, it was important for personnel who served this program to note that parents could still be in a state of "emotional disorganization" as Blacher described. In an extensive review of literature regarding the birth of a child with handicaps, Blacher (1984) identified parent reactions ranging from guilt or self-blame, shock, denial, depression, acceptance, and understanding. Furthermore, he wondered if parental reactions could be differentiated based on the severity of the child's handicap, how PL 94-142 would have influenced parental reactions in the present day and how this information could be utilized by the individuals who work with parents of handicapped children.

Lipsky (1985) criticized the professionals' negative interpretations of such parental reactions and challenged the professionals to look at these reactions more

positively, to view parents and families as resilient, to focus on family support needs or on the type and quality of coping strategies and to see parents as fit partners.

In 1971, Calvert cited that, "three-fourths of the 179 project proposals were disapproved under the Federal Handicapped Children's Education Act for reasons related to inadequate participation of parents in the proposed program" (p. 1). Calvert noted that family involvement should be a planned and purposeful part of an early education program. Based on observations of programs and review of a large number of program descriptions, Calvert concluded that there were at least six dimensions in examining the nature of family involvement. These were: (1) learning, (2) working with children, (3) planning and policy-making, (4) disseminating information about the program, (5) assisting in administering the program, and (6) evaluating the program.

Numerous articles cited a shift in philosophy in working with parents of handicapped children spurred by PL 94-142. Although unsupported by empirical data, it was believed that current practice theoretically assumed that parents were more expressive of their needs in relation to their handicapped child; therefore, they were more involved in making decisions about their child's educational program. Budoff (1975), Turnbull and Turnbull (1982) and Winton (1986) alerted professionals to this developing trend. For

example, Budoff cited the impact of parental involvement in a Massachusetts school district in 1968 where parents questioned the placements of 22 minority children in mentally retarded classes. The parents also raised questions about the school's non-compliance with the stated related services. The parents' protest caused the retesting of the children which showed that 16 of the 22 were misplaced (not retarded but learning disabled) and which further led to the enactment of Massachusetts' Chapter 766 which "provided for comprehensive assessment, mainstreaming, parent involvement and equality of resources..." (Budoff, 1975, p. 513).

Furthermore, Winton (1986) stressed that PL 94-142 assured the handicapped child with an appropriate education and to involve those who knew him or her well through conferences such as the MDCs and IEP meetings. Additionally, Brinckerhoff and Vincent (1986) reported that in a limited study of 14 parents' decision-making in IEP meetings, the seven parents who received information about the IEP process, role of participation, etc., indicated a significantly greater frequency in contributions, goals generated, and programming decisions made at the IEP meeting compared to the seven who did not receive the aforementioned orientation.

Available literature revealed that in spite of the school personnel's conscious effort to involve parents in

the schools, the lack of success in this effort was in part due to the level of parental participation in their child's education. Bailey, et al. (1986) cited numerous sources in differentiating families and their responses to a handicapped child. Firstly, he and his co-authors cited the Bailey and Simeonsson paper which characterized the "ideal" family as follows: (1) offered support for the role and development of each family member, (2) provided resources to cope with internal and external stresses, and (3) was mutually enjoyable within family interactional patterns.

Secondly, the authors further suggested inclusion of other dimensions such as family structure, family interactional patterns, family life functions, and family life cycle in evaluating family strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, the 1983 study of McCubbin and Patterson cited the need to be aware of family resources, family events, and family coping strategies.

Turnbull and Turnbull (1982) alerted professionals to consider two assumptions in working with parents:

> First, a policy analysis should explicate the valuative criteria for determining effective parent participation practices...
>
> Secondly, a comprehensive evaluation of parent involvement activities should consider the viewpoint of parents, rather than that wholly of professionals or other policy makers... (p. 120-121).

Moreover, Winton (1986) stated that working with families of handicapped children should be on an indivi-

dualized approach. A family assessment could include the following domains: (1) Child variable relevant to family functioning, (2) family needs for support, information, training, (3) parent-child interaction, (4) parental perspectives on child rearing, and (5) critical events in the family's current life cycle. Winton concluded that, "Without a thorough understanding of the family's definition of its situation, efforts to intervene will likely fail" (1986, p. 8).

Winton further recommended the utilization of the family-focused intervention with young children proposed and developed by Bailey, et al. (1986) which incorporated assumptions from the goodness-of-fit concept and family systems theory.

Moreover, the only research material found by this writer specific to the subject of the study was the research done by Johnson, et al. in 1986. The authors interviewed 19 parents (17 mothers, 2 fathers) sometime after their children had moved out of the pre-school specialized education program. The parents were asked about concerns and satisfaction regarding their child's transition, their role as decision-makers, and the effects of the transition on the family. The authors concluded that these parents typically:

(1) Expressed concern about their involvement in their child's transition from pre-school to kindergarten,

(2) Sought and received information from a variety of sources about their child's transition and progress,

(3) Visited their child's future programs, met with new teachers, and attended transition-related meetings,

(4) Preferred still more opportunities to plan and communicate with educators prior to, during, and after their child's transition,

(5) Participated in decisions regarding program selection and educational planning for their child,

(6) Were confronted with unique issues regarding their child's education and placement,

(7) Expressed a general satisfaction that their child's programs were meeting their child's needs, and

(8) Underwent a degree of transition-related stress, even when they agreed that their child was ready to move on (p. 15-17).

Johnson and others acknowledged that limitations of the study included a small sample, possible skew in the subjects' recollections of stressful events, and the subjects were selected from programs which already had a transition model in place. Nonetheless, it was significant to note that the parents in this study indicated the greatest satisfaction with parent-teacher conferences and the least satisfaction with the amounts and types of school and classroom involvement (see Appendix A).

The low satisfaction of parents with classroom involvement was supported by Lipsky (1985) and Turnbull and Turnbull (1982) who believed that parents in general and parents of handicapped children in particular, relied on the expertise of teachers in the education of their children. The authors also found that parents wished for professionals to respond to their expressed need and to see their adjustment to having a handicapped child in more positive ways. These parents acknowledged tremendous pressures and needed assistance with coping strategies.

The literature is consistent in supporting that when a child's program is changed, parents experience uncertainties and fears. The move from a "family-oriented" setting to a "child-oriented" school is more impersonal and usually does not make available to parents the previous sources of support. Pertinent literature emphasizes components which include parent-teacher conferences to give parents the opportunity to ask questions about their child's progress and express their opinions. It shows the positive impact of transition-related activities which include information-giving, problem-solving, and support for parental efforts. The interdisciplinary approach provides a comprehensive effort in evaluating and monitoring the children's needs and progress. Consideration of all the components previously mentioned plus a systematic tracking of the candidates for

transition assure success in developing a transition program.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of General Goals

The primary goal of this practicum was to provide parents with an effective and meaningful involvement in working through issues related to their child's transition from the PIE program to another setting in the public schools. The second goal was to assist parents, teachers and other school personnel in designing and conducting mutually satisfying transition-related activities. The third and final goal was to develop a model for transition-related activities and procedures.

Behavioral Expectations

More specific goals, expected behaviors, assessment instruments and standards of performance are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Performance Objectives

The following specific goals were projected for this practicum:

Expected Behaviors	Assessment Instruments	Standards of Performance
1. The parents, as a result of follow-up by staff, will select topics for the two workshops.	The parents will respond to a questionnaire (see Appendix B).	30 of the 40 parents will complete a written questionnaire and select five workshop topics.
2. The parents will indicate their attendance in two workshops as a result of taking their interests/ concerns into consideration.	Parents will respond to an invitation regarding workshop dates (see Appendix C).	24 of the parents who completed the questionnaire will indicate positive responses to to attend two workshops.
3. Parents present at the workshops will evaluate presenters and components of the workshops.	Parents will respond to a written questionnaire (see Appendix F).	27 of the parents in attendance at each workshop will submit workshop evaluations.
4. The parents will attend a meeting in August to have further opportunity to address their concerns.	The parents will respond to an invitation regarding a meeting in August (see Appendix G).	12 of the 40 parents involved in this practicum will indicate a positive response to attend a meeting in August.

Continued Table

Expected Behaviors	Assessment Instruments	Standards of Performance
5. The parents will express one concern and receive one suggestion from the teacher during the parent-teacher conference.	a) Responses to a written questionnaire completed by the teacher (see Appendix H).	a) 30 of the parents who completed parent-teacher conferences will express a concern about their child to the teacher during this conference. Additionally, the teacher will note one suggestion in response to parental issue(s).
	b) Response to an item in a questionnaire completed by the teachers (see Appendix H).	b) Teachers will rate 7 of the parents who completed parent-teacher conferences with a low degree of anxiety.
6. Parents will express fewer concerns/issues during the post-transition conference with the social worker.	a) Social workers' responses to the written questionnaire (see Appendix I).	a) 10 of the parents interviewed by the social workers will indicate negative responses to the presence of concerns.
	b) Social workers' responses to the written questionnaire (see Appendix I).	b) 7 of the parents interviewed at post-transition will express a high degree of satisfaction regarding their child's placement.

Continued Table

Expected Behaviors	Assessment Instruments	Standards of Performance
	c) Social workers' responses to the written questionnaire (see Appendix I).	a) 7 of the parents interviewed at post-transition will express a low level of anxiety regarding their child's schooling.
7. Parents will express a level of satisfaction regarding transition-related activities.	Parent responses to the written questionnaire regarding transition-related activities (see Appendix J).	Workshops, parent-teacher conferences and post-transition interviews by social workers will be rated highly satisfactory by 22 parent respondents.
8. The teachers' ratings of post-transition activities will reveal similar responses to that of the parents.	Teacher responses to the questionnaire regarding parental satisfaction for transition-related activities (see Appendix K).	Workshops, parent-teacher conferences and post-transition interviews by social workers will be rated highly satisfactory by 5 of the teachers.

Evaluation Instruments

To determine whether or not, as a result of the implementation of transition-related activities, parents would increase their participation in the practicum activities and allay their anxieties about the change in their child's program, evaluation instruments were designed and utilized by this writer. To secure parent input in the selection of workshop topics, a questionnaire (see Appendix B) was prepared and distributed through the teachers who assisted the writer. This questionnaire asked for five choices out of fourteen topics with provisions for other suggestions. Parental signature and dates completed were requested which assisted this writer in identifying interested parents in anticipating attendance in the two workshops.

A questionnaire about the number of workshop dates parents would be interested to attend was also distributed through the teachers. Data provided through this instrument were utilized to plan workshop date(s) accordingly (see Appendix C).

To measure parental satisfaction with workshop topics, presenters, and activities, parents completed an evaluation questionnaire (see Appendix F) with additional items soliciting reactions to the discussion period. Comments and suggestions were also requested in this written questionnaire.

To secure data on the extent of parental interest to participate in a meeting in August, 1988, a questionnaire was distributed at the first workshop scheduled May 13, 1988 (see Appendix G).

To test teachers' notion about lack of parent participation (i.e., verbal) in parent-teacher conferences, a post-conference instrument (see Appendix H) was developed, completed by the teacher after the conferences, and submitted to the writer at the end of the workshop dates. A schedule for parent conferences was prepared with the cooperation of the teachers and the social worker. These conferences were scheduled in the afternoon of the two workshop dates.

To determine parental reactions to the transition activities once their child moved to the new school/program, district social workers responded to a questionnaire which indicated parental concern and the social workers rating about the level of parental anxiety related to their child's placement (see Appendix I).

The parents' and teachers' evaluations of all the activities implemented during the practicum period were measured by utilizing a written instrument which requested them to indicate the levels of satisfaction about the activities which transpired (see Appendices J and K).

With the assistance of the head teacher and utilization of the system's tracking system, data about the child's

placement and new school were easily secured. This information subsequently led to identifying the social workers who would be involved in the follow-up of the parent participants. Therefore, the questionnaire on post-transition activities (see Appendix J) was distributed at an orientation meeting with the district social workers on August 10, 1988. Specifically, these staff members requested the parents to complete the instrument at the time of the follow-up interview in September, 1988. The teachers' evaluations of the post-transition activities (see Appendix K) were collected by the writer on September 15, 1988.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGIES

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Strategies in achieving active and effective parent involvement in preschool educational programs were noted to be influenced by two factors. Firstly, a philosophy which assured that parental concerns and issues were respected, listened to, and addressed. Secondly, transition or the child's move to a new school or program involved change and could be stressful for the child and the family; therefore, families needed support at this particular phase of their child's education.

Professional staff would be remiss if transition activities were unstructured and cursorily developed. Fowler (1982), as cited in Johnson, et al. (1986) stated that, "...a child's chances for success could be increased with planning developed to prepare children for differences between preschool and kindergarten" (p. 11).

Planning activities should primarily focus on the parents of the handicapped child realizing their significant role in child outcomes. Winton (1986) proposed that Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development be

seriously considered. This model, Winton explained, "redefines the saliency and importance of parents. Rather than being viewed solely as additional manpower or contributors to child development, parents now are being appreciated as members of a significant and mediating social system that must be understood, and whose contribution to understanding the contexts influencing and being influenced by the child is critical in formulating meaningful intervention goals" (p. 2-3).

Johnson, et al. (1986) suggested that family involvement should be individualized by considering the individual needs and resources of the family. Planning assisted all participants to arrive at mutually compatible goals. Plans for the child's transition should include the following (Johnson, et al., 1986, p. 11):

(1) Consideration of both the child's and family's unique transition needs

(2) Sufficient exchange of information between the preschool and the parents, and

(3) Parent and professional collaboration in the decision-making (Winton, Turnbull, & Blacher, 1984).

Winton (1986) stressed that the critical factor which influenced the success of any intervention (i.e., transition activities in this study), is the skill and knowledge of the professionals working with families. Such knowledge and skills should be in areas such as family

systems theory, group dynamics, communication and interviewing, and family assessment.

Turnbull and Turnbull (1982) suggested that public policy should tolerate a range of parent involvement choices and options matched to the needs and interests of the parents. These authors recommended the consideration of the following:

> (1) More relevant criteria include improved adaptation of the family to the needs of the child, reduction of family stress, improved parent-child relationship, improved self-esteem for the family and the child, reduction in the rate of institutionalization, reduction in the degree and frequency of parent burnout, and improved social competence for the child.
>
> (2) A comprehensive evaluation of parent involvement activities should consider the viewpoint of parents, rather than that wholly of professionals or other policy makers. The study should investigate the relationships of child, family, and program variables to successful practices. Family variables might include parents' educational values, expectations for the child, expectations for service, level of stress, extent of accessible support systems, locus of control, assertiveness, educational background, and long-term goals for the child (p. 120-121).

The solution to the problem included activities which were not routine in nature but anticipated to satisfy the parents' unique needs. Ideas were gleaned from the Johnson study which showed that the three most satisfying activities for parents were preschool parent-teacher conferences, preschool-home communication, and kindergarten parent-teacher conferences. The solution further hinged on the professionals' ability to respond to the concerns parents

mentioned before their child's transition. Johnson and his co-authors secured the following information in 1986:

(1) When should transition planning begin?

(2) How should transition planning proceed?

(3) Who is responsible for interaction between the preschool and the new program regarding their child's transition?

(4) How can parents prepare themselves, their families, and their child for the transition?

(5) What characteristics should parents look for in a new program that will meet their child's (and family's) special needs? (p. 16).

Additionally, a solution to the problem included a more objective interpretation of parent involvement by both the parents of handicapped children and the professionals who served them. This was based on the assumption that parents deferred to the teachers' and the other professionals' expertise. Accepting this fact allowed the professionals to be less frustrated in their contacts with parents. Professionals then focused on securing parental opinions on matters that worried them the most.

This view was not only supported by authors and researchers in the United States, but others as well outside of this country (Payne and et al. 1986). For example, in their study of primary school teachers' and parents' views of general home-school relations, the authors found that teachers and parents were defensive and there were differences in how parents and teachers perceived their roles.

Description of Selected Solutions

Brandt (1987) suggested that since the child's move from an informal to a more impersonal school setting could be unsettling for both parents and child, a staff should be designated to give assistance to parents through a coordinated program of services focused upon alleviating stresses related to the change in program or placement. He also emphasized establishing linkages to enhance parent-teacher interaction and tracking of program transition candidates.

In addressing the problems and goals of this practicum, the writer was guided by: (a) The need for coordinating transition activities, (b) the need for establishing linkages to enhance parent-teacher interaction, and (c) the need for systematic tracking of program transition candidates.

Moreover, the parents, teachers, and other school personnel were involved in all the phases of problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Blacker (1984) cited a need to increase staff's sensitivity to the ramifications of parental reactions to having a handicapped child; Lipsky (1985) identified the need for professionals to develop services which focused on family support and quality of coping strategies.

This practicum also included information-giving to parents (Calvert, 1971); provided both parents and teachers the opportunity for mutual exchange through the structured parent-teacher conference, and follow-up interviews with the district social workers (Budoff, 1987, Turnbull & Turnbull, 1982; and Winton, 1986). The post-transition interview was found highly satisfying by parents and served to support parental efforts at coping with stresses related to their child's program or school change (Johnson, et al. 1986).

Lastly, the solutions developed for this practicum were further cited in researchers and papers by Newton, et al. (1965), Whittington (1973), and Zeitlin, et al. (1985). The authors stressed the need to coordinate services, conduct staff development to clarify roles and procedures, and assist parents in the effective utilization of school and community resources.

Report of Action Taken

Ideas about this project developed during the month of January, 1988 when the writer was invited by the head teacher and the social worker of the PIE Program to attend a parents' meeting. The discussion revolved on issues which ranged from problems with transportation, getting assistance for clothing, food and basic needs, the school's expectations, and worries of parents regarding the move of their child when they reached their third birthday. The latter subject caught the writer's attention.

In January and February, the writer examined attendance records and procedures of the school related to the transition process. The literature search on the subject matter provided baseline information in developing an agenda for discussion with the staff about transition activities on February 9. The outcomes of this meeting revealed the staff's lack of a conceptual understanding of transition processes, fragmented procedures, and a lack of awareness regarding concerns of parents at this time in their child's schooling. The staff expressed total support for an ongoing project to identify, plan, and implement a transition program in the school. Parents were informed of the practicum plans on February 26.

In March, 1988, the writer secured administrative approval from the program director and the school principal. Additionally, preliminary activities included the formulation of a survey instrument for parents, preparing a tentative calendar of events and alerting possible speakers about their participation in May and June. The social worker and head teacher assisted the writer in collecting data on the students and their families. Forty students approached their third birth dates and were the subjects of this practicum. At the end of April, two questionnaires were completed by the parents. One questionnaire provided information about their understanding of the word transition, their knowledge of their rights, MDCs and IEPs,

and concerns they might have about their child's move to another program. The second questionnaire provided information about topics they would like addressed.

In March and April, weekly meetings were conducted by the writer with the PIE Program staff and two parent volunteers to attend to several issues which needed attention. For example, designation of a site for the workshops, choice and delivery of lunches, printing of the program, and sending notices to parents. The principal, who fully supported the project, gave supplies and clerical assistance. The Director of the PIE Program secured funds for coffee and lunches through the system's Bureau of Special Education Staff Development.

At the end of April, presenters were confirmed and the workshop preparations were completed. Other activities during this month included formulation of questionnaires and identification of processes and dates for latter activities (see Appendices B to K).

Moreover, the writer, with the assistance of the Director of the Bureau of Social Work discussed strategies to secure the district superintendents' approval for the participation of eight district social workers in the project during the summer and the first two weeks in September. The approval of five district superintendents was formally secured the first week in June. It should be

noted that the subjects of this practicum resided in the five districts.

The workshops and parent-teacher conferences were completed May 16, 1988 and June 13, 1988, respectively. On June 22, 1988, the writer conducted another meeting with the PIE Program staff, the two parent volunteers and the eight district social workers. Positive responses to the activities, speakers, lunch, etc., were shared with the writer by those present. More significantly, the district social workers were oriented to the goals of the practicum and their role in the follow-up interviews.

Funding for the summer school program was cut to four weeks instead of the previously approved six-week schedule. The summer program included the attendance of all the subjects of this practicum. This period gave the writer and district social workers ample time to further interact with the parents.

The meeting with the parents in August was held as planned. Results of this meeting is presented in the conclusions section of this report.

The constraints of her workload did not allow the writer to conduct site visits in September, 1988. However, she was available for telephone consultations to all the parents, PIE staff and district social workers.

During the week of September 19-23, 1988 more data were received from the district social workers and the PIE

teachers. In the following two weeks, the data were analyzed and the report completed.

The preliminary findings of this report were discussed with the 15 social workers assigned to the Early Childhood for the Handicapped (ECEH) Program on October 2, 1988. Moreover, the writer would present a summary of this practicum at a citywide meeting of the Bureau of Social Work in January 9, 1989 and to the Friends of Special Education in February, 1989.

The implementation of this practicum was marked by a smooth flow of activities and procedures. Adjustments were made (i.e., cancellation of home visits) as needed. The head teacher's log of events conveyed that schedules were kept accordingly and issues resolved in consultation with the writer.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Characteristics of Parent Participants

The racial/ethnic distribution of the 40 parents originally involved in this practicum comprised 38% Black, 29% White, non-Hispanic, 22.9% Hispanic, 5.6% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 4.5% American Native/Alaskan Native.

The parents' age ranged from 18 to 35 years. Twenty were between the ages 20 to 25 years, 10% under 20 years, and 10% between 30 to 35 years.

Thirty of the parents completed high school, nine dropped out between the second or third year in their high school program, and one had college education. Moreover, 26 were receiving public assistance, 12 had incomes under $20,000 and two reported incomes of at least $35,000. Twenty-six of the parents were single mothers and 14 had intact families.

Information about the number of children in the participants households revealed that 18 had three children, 12 had two, and 10 had one. Thirty-six of the 40 parents who were all mothers participated in the transition activities.

Results

As previously stated in Chapter III, this practicum was designed with the following goals: (a) To provide parents with an effective and meaningful involvement in working through issues related to their child's transition from the PIE program to another setting in the public schools, (b) to assist parents, teachers and other school personnel in designing and conducting mutually satisfying transition services, and (c) to develop a model for transition-related activities and procedures.

Results of this practicum were evaluated in terms of eight behavioral objectives (expected behaviors) and standards of performance see (Table 1, pp. 20-22).

The first objective was that, "the parents, as a result of follow-up by staff, will select topics for two workshops." The goal was met successfully since 32 parents (the standard of performance was 20) submitted responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix B). The five topics selected by the 32 parents were as follows:

- Transition
- Special Education Programs
- From a Parent: Views on how the PIE Program helped and his/her experiences in the new school
- After school programs, and
- Having a handicapped child

The second objective was more than successfully attained since the 32 parents who completed the questionnaire indicated that they would attend the two workshops. This response was more than what the writer set as a standard of performance which was 24 positive responses.

Thirty-six of the 40 parents (4 more than the anticipated participants) attended the two workshops. The four parents who were unable to attend called the teachers and indicated an interest in getting information from the teacher or other staff at the end of the year. These parents either could not take off from their jobs or had illness in the family.

Based on the previously stated data, the third objective was successfully achieved.

Data that were secured about workshop presentations revealed positive responses for most of the selected topics and presenters. Specifically, 29 of the 36 parents gave "Information shared" an excellent rating. The topic "Transition" which was presented by a child psychiatrist involved in the birth to three program of a hospital was highly received by the parents as indicated by all the parents noting that the topic was "most helpful", and gave it an excellent rating.

The topic "Parents Experiences in the PIE Program" was considered "most helpful" by 21 of the parents while 15 noted that it was "least helpful." Further discussion of

this data is presented in the conclusions section of this report.

Twenty-four of the parents considered the topic "Special Education Programs" as "most helpful" while 12 checked the topic as "least helpful." The ratings for the speaker who was the Director of Staff Development for Special Programs indicated quite a range with 17 of the respondents giving a rating of 3.

The topic "After School Programs" was noted "most helpful" by only two of the parents; the 26 who checked off "least helpful" further gave presenters a rating of 2. More discussion of this data is discussed in the conclusions section of this report.

With regard to the topic, "Coping with the Needs of a Handicapped Child," 20 of the parents noted it "most helpful." The presenter, who is a coordinator for the handicapped component of the Bureau of Early Childhood Education, was given a rating of 5 by 15 of the parents. Eleven of the parents gave a rating of 4; eight gave a rating of 3 and two gave a rating of 2.

Item number 5 of the workshop questionnaire which asked the question, "Were your concerns addressed during the discussion period?" received a positive response from all the parents.

Moreover, 26 of the parents gave the two workshops an overall rating of excellent.

Twelve responses to item number 4 of the workshop questionnaire revealed that five parents requested more information on how to cope with a handicapped child and seven needed more information about after school programs.

Item 7 which asked for comments and suggestions indicated "thank you," "excellent speakers," and "I am glad I came." Thirty parents suggested that these workshops should be scheduled for the next group of parents whose children would change programs or schools.

The fourth behavioral objective which asked that 12 of the total number of parents would agree to attend a meeting in August was met. Exactly 12 parents signed up for this activity. This meeting, which was held August 10, 1988 was attended by eight parents, the writer, and the head teacher. Four of the 12 parents informed the staff that they were going on vacation and apologized for changing plans. The meeting was informally structured which gave the parents another opportunity to ask information about their child's new program. The writer and the head teacher felt that the meeting was supportive of the parents' need to know that "other parents had similar worries" and staff were going to be accessible in the new school to assist them.

The 36 parents who attended both workshops also completed parent-teacher conferences. These conferences

were scheduled at 15-minute intervals with the eight PIE Program teachers. In part, the standard of performance set for this fifth objective which was 30 of the 36 parents who completed parent-teacher conferences will express a concern about their child to the teacher during this conference, was met with a high degree of success since all the 36 parents, according to the teachers' data, expressed at least one concern. Similarly, all the teachers gave suggestions addressing parental concerns which focused upon the limitations of their child's handicapping conditions, the worries about who to talk to or with if they had questions in the new school, and resources for after school programs.

Additionally, in conjunction with the previously described interaction between parents and teachers, 12 of the 36 parents were rated by the teachers with a low degree of anxiety. Thus, with this data, the writer's fifth objective more than met the standard of performance set at seven parents indicating a low degree of anxiety.

The sixth objective which was stated as "parents will express fewer concerns/issues during the post-transition conference with the social worker," aimed to examine if parents still had concerns once the child was in the new school. According to the district school social workers' responses, 20 of the 32 parents available for post-transition interviews indicated negative responses to the presence of concerns and were relieved to note that their

child "is like any child who attends the neighborhood school." This response exceeded the standard performance set at 10 parents indicating negative responses to the presence of concerns.

The placement decisions for the 40 children were arrived at through multidisciplinary staff conferences which were conducted in May, 1988. The information secured through the tracking system showed that 14 were recommended for regular kindergarten placements, 20 were recommended for full-time special education programs, and six were recommended for itinerant services. It should be noted that the combined figures for full-time special education placements and itinerant services indicated that 26 of the students were recommended for special education programs.

The data analysis of special education recommendations revealed that the 26 students were placed in the following programs: 1) physically handicapped (12), 2) visually-impaired, blind (3), 3) hearing-impaired, deaf (5), 4) autistic (4), and speech (2).

The 32 parents interviewed by the district school social workers during the post-transition phase of this project provided the information that 10 of the children were recommended for regular education and 22 children were recommended for special education. All these parents, according to the district school social workers' data,

indicated that they were fully satisfied with the placement decision for their child.

However, a closer examination of the data revealed that whereas all the 10 parents whose children were recommended for regular education were noted by the district social workers to have a low degree of anxiety, 22 of the parents whose children were recommended for special education who were followed up in September, 1988 were noted to have a high degree of anxiety related to their child's schooling. The numerous comments noted in the questionnaires indicated the parents' wish for more support in having access to personnel, getting more information to assist in their child's education, and resources for after school programs. Thus, based on available data, the standard of criteria set by the writer for this behavioral objective was not achieved. Overall, 15 more parents were noted with a high degree of anxiety according to the district school social workers' responses.

The parents' evaluation of all the transition activities conducted during the practicum period indicated that all of the parent respondents (40) rated all the activities highly satisfactory. Thus, the data showed that the seventh objective was achieved with overwhelming success compared to the standard of criteria set which was that parents would only note three activities (workshops, parent-

teacher conferences and post-transition interviews) as highly satisfying.

Furthermore, the district social workers' notes about additional parental comments cited that they deeply appreciated the staff's efforts and learned from the information they were given. Moreover, they expressed that the writer called them at least twice from August to September to ask them how they were coping, how their child was adapting in the new school and reminded them to "please cooperate and submit the evaluation." Five parents noted that they agreed to the cancellation of home visits originally planned as part of the program since almost "everyone saw each other in school during the summer."

The head teacher called the eight parents who were unable to participate in some of the activities (especially the post-transition interviews) but who were originally involved in the beginning stages of this project. According to the notes, these parents were quite apologetic and expressed they had either vacation plans, illness in the family or could not get away from their jobs. However, a neighbor, friend, or another parent in the program gave them a lot of information. They also indicated that they knew they could always call the head teacher for guidance if any problem(s) developed.

The teachers' evaluations of the transition activities echoed the parents' responses which were that all the

activities during this transition phase were indeed highly satisfying to the parents and themselves. Moreover, five of the eight teachers noted that the parent-teacher conferences helped them focus on the parents' need for support and alerted them to the most crucial fact that "change(s) could never be easy," and "it was hard to say good-bye." Overall, the standard of performance set by the writer for the eight objective was achieved with outstanding success since the teachers rated all activities as highly satisfying compared to achieving the same rating for only three of the activities.

Additionally, the telephone calls from the parent participants during the start of the school year decreased considerably. According to the head teacher's phone log, the 10 calls were easily handled since they were about missing reports or initiation of services such as speech or physical therapy.

Conclusions

The results of this practicum indicated that the three goals were attained by achieving all but one of the eight standards of performance. Specifically, what was not achieved was the standard of performance set against the parents expressing a low level of anxiety about their child's schooling. This finding was confirmed in the review of literature which indicates that parents of children with special needs demonstrate more anxiety or worries about

their child's future and continually experience more frustrations and fatigue in coping with the child's needs.

The evaluative information also demonstrated that among others, information-giving through workshops which considered topics selected by the parents resulted in increased attendance. However, the parents' ratings of presenters and evaluations of "most helpful" versus "least helpful" topics presented interesting dimensions. For example, the parents were not as impressed when the two parents presented their views about the PIE Program compared to the other presenters who were experts in their fields. Another example was the parents' negative response to the "After-School Program" topic which brought to their attention the cold reality about limited resources. This writer contends that this particular topic and its discussion did not give the parents a positive outlook about a much-needed resource.

The teachers' and parents' responses to the outcome of the parent-teacher conferences were highly positive which further confirmed that such mechanism, if focused and structured, could serve as an exemplary vehicle in encouraging parents to express their views and concerns and for the teachers to respond accordingly.

The series of activities which transpired during the period of this project were planned based on the parameters emphasized by the experts previously cited. The success of

this project was due to several factors. Firstly, the writer assured the participation of parents, teachers and other school personnel. Secondly, coordination was clearly established as the writer's function. Thirdly, each participants' role was well defined. Fourthly, support from administrators were secured and consistent feedback was provided. Lastly, internal and external resources were tapped to provide the most cost effective program.

This writer concurred with Epstein (1986) that parents with children in the classrooms of teachers who build parent participation into their regular teaching practice report being more aware of their children's progress and curriculum, and rate teachers higher on interpersonal relations and overall teaching quality.

In conclusion, all school personnel and teachers in particular should seriously address what Epstein (1982) stated, "Despite almost universal approval of the idea of parent involvement and increasing evidence that teachers can affect parent and student achievements, attitudes, and behaviors, relatively few teachers make frequent or systematic use of parent involvement activities" (p. 23).

Recommendations

Based on the outcome of this practicum, the following recommendations should be noted:

. Transition of the student at any level of schooling should be anticipated as a source of stress for both the student and the family. Therefore, school

personnel should provide services/activities which address the students' or parents' concerns.

- School personnel should encourage and provide opportunities for parental sharing which could add energy to problem-solving and achievement of goals.

- Schools where children are bused should be more sensitive to the parents' need to establish a link or a sense of belonging. Social events or open houses should be conducted.

- Parents of children with special needs should be provided supportive services on a consistent basis.

- Coordination of services by a designated staff and the adoption of the multidisciplinary approach in conducting inservices to parents should be the primary guidelines for school personnel.

Dissemination

The writer presented preliminary findings of this report at the October 2, 1988 meeting of the school social workers (15) assigned to the Early Childhood Education for the Handicapped Program. Their highly positive response to the activities or "model program" was most encouraging.

Subsequent presentations are scheduled as follows:

- December 6, 1988 at the School Social Work Seminar, Jane Adams College of Social Work - University of Illinois

- December 14, 1988
  Head Start - Department of Human Services Citywide Meeting

- January 9, 1989
  Bureau of Social Work Citywide Meeting
  Chicago Public Schools

- February, 1989 (specific date to be announced)
  Friends of Special Education - in the Chicago area

- April, 1989
  High School District 31
  Chicago Public Schools

References

Bailey, D.B. et al. (1866). Family-focused Intervention: A functional model for planning, implementing, and evaluating family services in early intervention. Journal of the Division of Early Childhood, 10 (2), 156-171.

Blacher, J. (1984). Sequential Stages of Parental Adjustment to the Birth of a Child with Handicaps: Facts or Artifacts?. Mental Retardation, 22 (2), 55-68.

Early Intervention. Quarterly Newsletter of the Birth to Three Clearinghouse. (1987). 1 Issue 4, Illinois. 1-2.

Brandt. (1987). Early Intervention. Quarterly Newsletter of the Birth to Three Clearinghouse. 1 Issue 4, Illinois: 1-2.

Brinckerhoff, J.L. & Vincent, L.J. (1986). Increasing Parental Decision-making at the Individualized Educational Program Meeting. Journal of the Division of Early Childhood, 11 (1), 46-57.

Budoff, M. (1975). Engendering Change in Special Education Practices. Harvard Educational Review, 45 (4), 507-526.

Calvert, D.R. (1971). Dimensions of Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education. Exceptional Children, 37, 655-659.

Epstein, J.L. (1982). Student Reaction to Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement. New York: Paper Present at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

Epstein, J.L. (1986). Parent Reactions to Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement. Early School Journal. 86. 277-294.

Healy, A. Keesee, P.D. & Smith, B. (1875). Early Services for Children with Special Needs: Transitions for Family Support. Iowa City: University of Iowa. p. 88.

Johnson, T.E., Chandler, L.K., Kerns, G.M. & Fowler, S.A. (1986). What Are Parents Saying About Family Involvement in School Transitions? A Retrospective Transition Interview. Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 11 (1), 10-17.

Lipsky, D.K. (198
Coping. Ameri
614-617.

85). A Parental Perspective on Stress and
ican Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 55 (4),

Newton, M.R. et a
Preschool/and
Project. Sout
Orthopsychiatr

al. (1965). Crisis Intervention in
Early School Years: The Sumter Child Study
th Carolina: 42nd Annual American
ric Meeting.

Payne, M.A. & Hin
relationships:
Educational Re

nds, J.O. (1986). Parent teacher
Perspectives from a developing country.
search, 28 (2), 117-125.

Turnbull, A.P. &
Involvement in
Critique. Men

Turnbull, H.R. III. (1982). Parent
the Education of Handicapped Children: A
tal Retardation, 20 (3), 120-121.

Whittington, P. (
Handbook for D
5.

(1973). Early Childhood Program: A
Developing Preschool Programs. Mississippi:

Winton, P. (1986)
Families in In
Children, 19 (

). Effective Strategies for Involving
tervention Efforts. Focus on Exceptional
(2), 1-10.

Zeitlin, S. et al
for Interventi
the Council fo

l. (1985). Family Stress: A coping Model
ion. California: 63rd Annual Convention of
or Exceptional Children.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MEAN RATINGS RANK ORDERED MOST SATISFIED TO LEAST SATISFIED ON A SIX POINT LIKERT RATING SCALE

Mean Ratings Rank Ordered Most
Satisfied to Least Satisfied on a Six Point
Likert Rating Scale

Item	*Mean Rating
Preschool parent-teacher conferences	5.47
Preschool-home communication	5.21
Kindergarten parent-teacher conferences	5.18
Preschool IEP meetings	5.06
Printed information about kindergarten	5.00
Child pretransition visits to kindergarten	5.00
Child readiness	5.00
Preschool-home activities	5.00
Preschool-classroom involvement	4.89
Kindergarten-home communication	4.74
Placement Options	4.72
Kindergarten IEP meetings	4.64
Parent pretransition visits to kindergarten	4.55
Kindergarten-home activities	4.37
Interagency communication	4.23
Kindergarten classroom involvement	4.22

*Extremely Satisfied	6
Satisfied	5
Slightly Satisfied	4
Slightly Dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Extremely Dissatisfied	1

Source: Johnson, T.E., Chandler, L.K., Kerns, G.M. & Fowler, S.A. (1986). What Are Parents Saying About Family Involvement in School Transition? A Retrospective Transition Interview. Journal of the Division for Early Childhood. 11 (1), 16.

APPENDIX B

PARENT TOPIC SELECTION

Parent Topic Selection

Dear Parent:

Please indicate with a check five of the topics you would like more information on. Your selected topics will be considered for the workshops scheduled in May and June, 1988. Please leave this form with the teacher.

Thank you,

Sincerely

Transition-Related Topics

____ Federal and state laws and the handicapped

____ The education of handicapped children in regular classes

____ Transition - its meaning and roles of parents and staff

____ Special education programs

____ Film on multidisciplinary staffing conference and how to develop an IEP

____ For a parent: views on how the PIE Program helped and his/her experiences in the new school

____ Discipline and behavior

____ Reaction and leisure activities for handicapped children

____ Issues on separation

____ Your child's future

____ After school programs

____ Transportation

____ Agencies which can assist you

____ Having a handicapped child

____ Other(s)

_____ _____

Parent's Signature Date

APPENDIX C

PARENT WORKSHOP SELECTION

Parent Workshop Selection

Dear Parent:

Based on your response regarding transition-related topics, we have scheduled two workshops which will address the issues most of you selected. Both meetings will be held at the Parents' Room. The latter part of the program will provide ample time to answer many of your questions. The meeting will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Please indicate below if you can attend both meetings, one meeting or whether you will be unable to attend. We anticipate your attendance and look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely

____ I will be able to attend the workshop on May 16th and June 13th.

____ I will be able to attend only the May 16th Workshop.

____ I will be able to attend only the June 13th meeting.

____ I will be unable to attend both meetings and would like a conference with the social worker to discuss the Workshop material.

_____ _____

Parent's Signature Date

APPENDIX D

PIE PARENTS WORKSHOP I

Bureau of Social Work

May 16, 1988

PIE Parents' Workshop I
1311 West Jackson - Room 201

Agenda

9:00	Introductions	
9:15	Topic A:	Transition: Its Meaning: Roles of Parents and Staff
9:45	Topic B:	Parent's Comments Regarding His/Her Experiences/Observations/Suggestions (Post-Transition)
10:15 - 10:30		BREAK
10:30	Topic C:	Special Education Programs and Procedures
11:00 - 11:30		Questions/Sharing
11:30 - 12:30		Scheduled parent conferences (bag lunches) with teachers/other staff
1:15 - 3:15		Parent conferences

Moderator: Social Worker

Please submit evaluations to student volunteers (at the door).

The next workshop date is June 13.

Reminder: All day from 9:00 - 2:30 - Room 201

APPENDIX E

PIE PARENTS WORKSHOP II

Bureau of Social Work

June 13, 1988

PIE Parents' Workshop II
1311 West Jackson - Room 201

Agenda

9:00	Introductions	
9:15	Summary of May 16th Topics:	Parent assisted by social worker
9:30	Topic D:	After School Programs Representatives from the YMCA, Park District, Churches
10:05 - 10:15		BREAK
10:15 - 11:00		Topic E: Coping with the needs handicapped child ECEH coordinator & PIE head teacher
11:00 - 11:15		Remarks - Director, Bureau of ECEH
11:15 - 12:00		Questions
12:00 - 12:45		LUNCH
12:45 - 3:15		Scheduled parent conference with teacher and other staff

Moderator: President, Friends of the Handicapped

Reminder: Please leave your evaluations with student volunteers

APPENDIX F

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Workshop Evaluation

Workshop Date _____

EVALUATION

1. How do you rate the information shared with you today?

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

2. Which topic was most helpful to you with regard to transition?

Topic	Most Helpful	Least Helpful
A	_____	_____
B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____
D	_____	_____
E	_____	_____

3. How do you rate the presenters?

Topic A

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

Topic B

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

Topic C

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

Topic D

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

Topic E

0	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor		Average		Excellent

Evaluation
Page 2

4. Which two topics would you like more information on?

(1) _____

(2) _____

5. Were your concerns addressed during the discussion period?

Yes ____

No ____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Overall rating for this workshop

0 1 2 3 4 5
Poor Average Excellent

7. Comments and suggestions

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX G

LETTER TO PARENT REGARDING MEETING IN AUGUST, 1988

Letter to Parent Regarding Meeting in August, 1988

Dear Parent:

We have scheduled a pre-September meeting to see how the summer have been for you and your child. This will also give us the opportunity to discuss your child's and your feelings regarding the anticipated school experience. The meeting will be at Jones School, 1318 North Clybourn, Room 4.

Please check the appropriate space, sign and return to the teacher.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Check One:

____ I can attend the August meeting.

____ I cannot attend but would like for staff to call me.

Signature _____
Address _____
_____
_____
Telephone Number _____

APPENDIX H

TRANSITION RELATED PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Transition-Related Parent-Teacher Conference

Date _____

Child's Name _____

Issues expressed by Parent(s)/Guardian:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Suggestions offered to Parent(s)/Guardian:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Referred to:

____ Social Worker
____ P T
____ Speech Pathologist
____ O T
____ Psychologist
____ Other

Rate Parent's degree of anxiety

____ High ____ Medium ____ Low

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF POST-TRANSITION CONFERENCE WITH SOCIAL WORKER

Transition-Related Activity

Summary of Post-Transition Conference
with Social Worker

Issues expressed by Parent(s)/Guardian:

Rate Parent's degree of satisfaction regarding child's placement

____ High ____ Medium ____ Low

Rate Parent's degree of anxiety related to child's schooling

____ High ____ Medium ____ Low

APPENDIX J

EVALUATION OF TRANSITION-RELATED ACTIVITIES (PARENTS)

Overall Evaluation of Transition-Related Activities (Parent)

After having participated in the activities listed below, which were you satisfied with?

	Rating			
	High	Medium	Low	Zero
Workshops	____	____	___	____
Parent-Teacher conferences	____	____	___	____
Home visit conducted in August	____	____	___	____
Telephone conference in August	____	____	___	____
Pre-September meeting	____	____	___	____
Telephone conference in September	____	____	___	____
Follow-up by social worker in the new school	____	____	___	____

Comments:

APPENDIX K

EVALUATION OF TRANSITION-RELATED ACTIVITIES (TEACHERS)

Overall Evaluation of Transition-Related Activities (Teacher)

After having participated in the activities listed below, which were parents satisfied with?

	Rating			
	High	Medium	Low	Zero
Workshops	____	____	___	____
Parent-Teacher conferences	____	____	___	____
Home visit conducted in August	____	____	___	____
Telephone conference in August	____	____	___	____
Pre-September meeting	____	____	___	____
Telephone conference in September	____	____	___	____
Follow-up by social worker in the new school	____	____	___	____

Comments: